MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE USE, STOCKPILING, PRODUCTION AND TRANSFER OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION

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IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT FOR THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES

Purpose and scope of this paper

This paper sets out the background to, and includes a proposal for the establishment of an Implementation Support Unit (ISU) as part of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). This proposal, with its mandate to the GICHD for the establishment of the ISU, is being presented for the approval of States Parties.

Background

The Intersessional Programme of Work (ISP) was established by the First Meeting of the States Parties to the Treaty (Maputo, 1999). Since then, it has evolved into a very useful and critical element supporting the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines.

The success of the ISP has been founded on the work of a wide number of States Parties, as well as non-governmental organizations and international organizations, which have dedicated financial and personnel resources to supporting the implementation of the Convention; a particular weight has been absorbed by those States Parties representatives in Geneva who have served as Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs of the Committees.

In this regard, critical to the success of the ISP has been the contribution of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. At that same time that States Parties agreed to the creation of the ISP, they also accepted the offer of the GICHD to provide administrative and logistical resources to assist the Programme. After the establishment of the Coordinating Committee (CC) during the Second Meeting of the States Parties (Geneva, 2000), the GICHD also provided assistance for the CC meetings. This assistance has been essential to ensuring the effectiveness and organization of the Intersessional Meetings, as well as the work of the Coordinating Committee.

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We are now completing our second full year of ISP operations, and some lessons have been derived from the experience to date. Most importantly for the purpose of this discussion, it has become clear that the extent of our future success and sustainability of the process will hinge on ensuring adequate, but limited, continuing dedicated support for States Parties related to the ISP and implementation of the Convention.

Discussions to date

A paper entitled "Implementation Support for the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines" was circulated during the Intersessional Week in May 2001. This paper noted the points above and proposed the establishment of a small unit, in accordance with the mandate of States Parties, that would further enhance the operations of the implementation process and facilitate participation of all States Parties.

The Peruvian Co-Chair of the Standing Committee for Mine Clearance and Related Technologies addressed the issue during the Meeting of the Standing Committee on General Status and Operation of the Convention, urging the States Parties to take action to enhance the processes supporting the Treaty, including the Intersessional Programme of Work.

Such support was noted to be critical to ensure that all States Parties could continue to have direct responsibility and involvement in the management and direction of the implementation process. He noted that currently, the representatives of States Parties face significant personal burdens when taking on positions as Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs, and assistance is needed for them to more effectively meet the obligations of these positions.

By providing a more focused basis of support, by permitting broader and more effective participation of States Parties, and by relieving Parties of administrative and routine functions, a small dedicated support unit should enable a more efficient allocation of resources while contributing to the effective implementation of the Convention.

The proposal was made that the GICHD could be the appropriate entity through which to provide this enhanced support as this would build on existing efforts and require only a slight increase in staff and resources. The incremental resources could be funded on a voluntary basis by willing States Parties with the support of the GICHD.

This initiative was warmly welcomed and received wide expressions of support from participants at the SC Meeting. It was stressed that this support unit should be accountable to the States Parties through the Coordinating Committee, and should optimize the use of resources.

Since then, the Coordinating Committee has met several times and developed further the cooperation with the GICHD. The concept of the Support Unit is set out below in terms of the proposed mandate and duties of the Unit, management approach, and general financing issues:

A. Mandate to the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

States Parties mandate the GICHD to establish an Implementation Support Unit to take care of issues related to the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines in accordance with the duties approved by States Parties.

The services GICHD provides to support the Mine Ban Treaty will include:

- preparing and supporting meetings of the Standing Committees and the Coordinating Committee, including writing summaries and facilitating follow-up activity;
- providing independent professional advice and assistance to the Coordinating Committee;
- establishing a documentation and resource database facility (on the Ottawa Process, Oslo Diplomatic Conference, Meetings of State Parties, SCEs, SCs and the CC).

B. Duties of the Implementation Support Unit

The duties of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) as part of the GICHD are the following:

Coordinating Committee (CC) meetings:

- Providing basic secretarial support, sending out notices of meetings, arranging meeting rooms, note taking, etc.
- Administrative and other follow-up to CC meeting decisions and provision of advice, on request, to the President and CC Members on technical and institutional issues (interaction, coordination and synergy with other organizations, retrieval of data on practices, etc).

Current President and incoming President of the Meeting of States Parties:

- Providing support across all facets of the President's duties. This can include advice on technical and other issues, preparation of CC meetings, providing back-up and support for all liaison/interaction with States Parties, the ICBL, ICRC, the UN and other international organizations and agencies as well as media and communication support.

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Standing Committees (SC)

- Providing basic secretarial support – sending out notices of meetings, arranging meeting rooms, note taking, etc.
- Providing advice, support and assistance, on request, to Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs.[1]
- Administrative follow-up to SC meeting decisions and provision of advice, on request, to the President and SC Co-Chairs and Co-Rapporteurs, on technical and institutional issues.

Communication and liaison

- Providing the support to ensure timely and consistent communication about the implementation process to all actors. This would include the preparation of media statements, organization of media briefings, preparation of briefing notes etc., and any communication that may be necessary for the current or incoming President to make.
- Providing back-up and support for all liaison/interaction with States Parties, the ICBL, ICRC, the UN, and other international organizations and agencies.
- Compiling contact lists etc., of actors involved in or interacting with the implementation of the Convention and keeping liaison channels active. This could include providing support to actors participating in the Intersessional Work, e.g., providing the public relations aspects of welcoming speakers, playing a coordination/information meeting place role as a one-stop location.
- Ensuring that the GICHD web site contains the latest information on the implementation process.

Sponsorship Programme

- Providing assistance in administrating the sponsorship programme.[2]

Budgeting and planning

- Compiling the additional budget needed by the GICHD for the Implementation Support Unit as well as the planning for the years ahead based on the projection and analysis of Intersessional Work and other aspects related to implementation.

Documentation

- Collecting, collating, storing and retrieving documentation on the Convention and its implementation.[3]

C. Management of the Unit

The Director of the GICHD will be accountable to the States Parties for the work of the ISU and will submit an annual report on its functioning.

The ISU will operate under the Director of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining according to Terms of Reference to be agreed in accordance with the mandate of States Parties. These Terms of Reference will be developed and agreed between the President, in consultation with the Coordinating Committee, and the GICHD. The ISU will therefore be a part of the GICHD, receiving administrative, technical and logistical support and operating under the financial and administrative supervision of the Director.

Between Meetings of States Parties, the ISU will, in the performance of its substantive duties on implementation issues, receive direction from and support the work of the Coordinating Committee, ensuring ongoing input from States Parties into the work of the ISU. The Director of the GICHD, or

a representative, shall participate as an observer at meetings of the Coordinating Committee to ensure effective and close communications and coordination.

D. Financing arrangements

To finance the activities a Fund for voluntary contributions shall be established. The annual budget will be established by mutual agreement between the President/Coordinating Committee and the Director of GICHD.

States Parties will endeavour to assure the necessary financial resources. GICHD will assist in this effort.

An annual financial report shall be submitted to the President/Coordinating Committee and to all donors. To assure transparency, the financial report shall be made available, upon request, to any State Party, interested institution and/or person.

The Fund shall be audited by an independent auditing company on an annual basis. The auditing report shall be forwarded to the President, Coordinating Committee and to donors.

Initially, funds will be sought to support the staffing of one officer and one support staff for the Unit. An additional staff member may be added later as the workload evolves and as funds permit. Recruitment of staff would be the responsibility of GICHD in close consultation with the Co-ordinating Committee. To maintain the independence of the Implementation Support Unit, its staffing will not include seconded personnel.

Next steps

If States Parties agree, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining is hereby mandated to proceed with the establishment of the Implementation Support Unit in accordance with this proposal and the President is mandated to finalize an agreement with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining – in consultation with the Coordinating Committee – in accordance with the mandate and proposal hereby approved by States Parties.

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[1] This is particularly relevant in supporting mine-affected/developing countries as well as other small delegations in their roles as some countries do not have representation in Geneva or may not be able to place as much staff and time on the issue as may be required.

[2] This would be a continuation of the existing sponsorship programme, funded by donors, and which has thus far been administrated by the GICHD.

[3] There is currently no comprehensive collection of documents on the Ottawa Process, the Oslo Diplomatic Conference, Meetings of States Parties, SCEs, SCs, etc. This complicates any research that could be necessary in the implementation process as well as in preparation for SCs and Meetings of States Parties. Currently most of this information is collected in pockets in different countries and the intention would be to provide an accessible place to house the material.